

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 ISLAMABAD 018810

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID
USAID/W FOR A/AID ANDREW NATSIOS, JBRAUSE
DCHA/OFDA GGOTTILIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER, BDEEMER
AID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA
SOUTH ASIA RESPONSE MANAGEMENT TEAM
SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE TASK FORCE
DCHA/FFP FOR JONATHAN DWORKEN
ANE DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR MARK WARD
BANGKOK FOR OFDA SENIOR REGIONAL ADVISOR TOM DOLAN
KATHMANDU FOR OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR WILLIAM BERGER
ROME PASS FODAG
GENEVA FOR RMA AND NKYLOH
NSC FOR JMELINE
EUCOM FOR POLA/J3/J4/J5
BRUSSELS FOR USAID PLERNER
NEW YORK FOR TMALY
SECDEF FOR SOLIC/PKHA, USDP/J3
JOINT STAFF WASH DC FOR J3/J4/J5
HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE FOR J3/J5

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [MASS](#) [ECON](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OIIP](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#)
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN - EARTHQUAKE: CONFUSION OVER WFP AND GOP
DIVISION OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION RESPONSIBILITIES

REF: Islamabad 17557

SUMMARY

1. On December 1, 2005 the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) and the Government of Pakistan (GOP) implemented a new division of geographic responsibilities to distribute food to approximately 2.3 million people in the earthquake-affected areas of Northern Pakistan. The GOP requested that WFP move its urban-based operations from main population centers to Allai, Kaghan, Neelum, Lipa and other high altitude valleys to take advantage of WFP's logistical capacity delivering food in difficult to access areas. The GOP is covering urban areas and rural areas easily accessible by road and has taken over WFP operations in Mansehra. However, in the geographic areas covered by the GOP, WFP is maintaining food distributions within UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) tented camps, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) tented schools, hospitals, and supplementary feeding programs for children under five and pregnant and lactating women. USAID nongovernmental partners (NGOs) have expressed frustration that the local government has not effectively communicated the terms of the new agreement to beneficiaries, creating unmet expectations. Despite these concerns with the details of food distribution responsibilities, there is currently an adequate supply of food in Pakistan for earthquake victims. End Summary.

Splitting the Caseload

2. At the outset of the emergency, the international humanitarian community took a collegial approach to determining areas of operation for food distribution. For the most part, NGOs on the ground identified their areas of operation and coordinated with WFP to target beneficiaries and establish emergency food distributions. In addition to WFP and NGO efforts, the GOP was also providing food, leading to some duplication of efforts.

3. On December 1, a new agreement went into effect that clarified areas of responsibilities and caseloads, making the entire movement and provision of food more efficient and maximizing individual organizational strengths. WFP is using a combination of land transport and helicopters to provide food to UNHCR tented camps and the difficult to access rural areas. The GOP and the provincial governments are covering urban and less affected areas, as well as insuring that markets and commercial food distribution networks are uninterrupted. WFP and the GOP are each responsible for providing food to 1.1 million people. Additionally, the International Committee for the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) is continuing its feeding and support program in the lower Neelum Valley for 150,000 beneficiaries.

Food Operations under the New Arrangement

-GOP Operations-

4. The GOP is responsible for ensuring food security to

approximately 1.1 million people living below 5,000 feet elevation by reactivating markets in the earthquake zone and launching cash compensation programs for earthquake victims who lost family members and/or had homes damaged or destroyed. When necessary, the GOP will provide direct food distributions; however, to the extent possible, the GOP will rely solely on market mechanisms to provide food and other commodities at reduced prices as well as government subsidized stores called "Utility Stores." The GOP is DCHA/FFP FOR JONATHAN DORKEN allocating more than 300,000 metric tons (MT) of wheat flour to Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) governments to be channeled through the utility stores and other market outlets. On December 9, the FRC reported that there are 30 operational utility stores in the earthquake-affected areas and a further 12 will be established.

-WFP Operations-

15. WFP is assisting its caseload of 1.1 million people through direct food distributions and supplementary feeding through March 2006. As of November 30, WFP had distributed 23,101 MT of emergency food commodities, of which 1,924 MT were distributed via air transport. This figure represents approximately 25 percent of the overall 101,000 MT required to feed the WFP caseload.

16. Through cooperating partners, WFP is providing blanket one-month food rations of 96 kilograms per six-person family to 751,221 people living above 5,000 feet elevation and other difficult to access areas in AJK and NWFP. Of this total, there are an estimated 441,221 beneficiaries in AJK and 310,000 in NWFP. WFP has sub-offices in Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Ghari Habibullah, and Batagram.

17. In addition to the general food distribution, WFP is providing or will provide food in UNHCR tented camps for up to 250,000 persons who have lost their homes, means of livelihoods, and income and are now living in tents in rural, urban, and semi-urban areas. In facilities supported by UNICEF and the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO), WFP is providing hospital feeding for up to 5,000 patients.

18. To support the nutritional needs of children, WFP is providing fortified blended cereal along with the general food distribution for children aged 6 months to 5 years. In affected villages and tented camps, these children are receiving wheat soya blend (WSB) as a supplementary ration, and WFP has the capacity to reach up to 150,000 beneficiaries. WFP is also conducting emergency school feeding for 150,000 primary school children in UNICEF-supported tent schools. In tented and open air schools, UNICEF/WFP-supported schools that were destroyed, and selected government schools that were destroyed, children are receiving high energy biscuits and dates.

----- WFP's Winter Logistics and Pipeline -----

19. WFP will continue to provide rations through March 2006 by helicopter in snow-covered inaccessible areas and by truck to accessible UNHCR camps, school feeding sites, and supplementary feeding programs. WFP has deployed 46 mobile warehouse tents with a total capacity of approximately 23,000 MT, utilized for food storage as well as for non-food item pre-positioning. All NGOs and agencies assisting in the earthquake relief effort have free access to mobile warehouse storage. An additional 22 mobile warehouse tents are in the pipeline and will be used to strengthen the logistics capacity of WFP and its cooperating partners. This is particularly valuable as it supports the ongoing effort to establish storage points as close as possible to beneficiary populations.

110. According to the USAID/DART Food for Peace Officer (FFPO), the WFP food commodity pipeline is quite healthy. WFP is currently distributing 2,400 Metric Tons (MT) of vegetable oil provided by USAID/FFP. An additional USAID/FFP donation of 2,490 MT of vegetable oil is currently being finalized. Presently, sufficient wheat exists in country to allow WFP to draw down its needs. Per reftel, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offer of a USD 12 million contribution to replace wheat used by WFP provides reassurance that WFP operations will continue beyond the winter. (Note: Although the WFP food commodity pipeline is healthy, WFP does not yet have the necessary funds to cover associated costs, such as road transportation and distribution, to continue its obligation through April 2006. The USAID/DART, in collaboration with the US Mission in Pakistan, continues to work with the GOP, donors, UN agencies, ICRC, and NGOs to address this important need. End note.)

Confusion over Division of Responsibilities

11. The new division of food assistance responsibilities makes good use of the respective operational capabilities of WFP and the GOP since WFP is delivering food to the most difficult to reach areas and the GOP is supporting areas that are easier to access. However, preliminary field reports suggest some difficulties with the handover process. NGOs have expressed frustration over the fact that the GOP has not effectively communicated the division of responsibilities to beneficiaries, leading to confusion among the population and unmet expectations.

12. In Mansehra, where WFP has handed over food assistance responsibility to the GOP, NGOs are particularly frustrated with the closure of WFP's office, which has left the logistics, food and nutrition, and information technology clusters without leadership. WFP is now handling NWFP operations from Ghari Habibullah but cluster meetings are still held in Mansehra. Field staff from some of WFP's cooperating partners are also concerned that the GOP has not yet taken over food distribution in several areas in Mansehra since WFP's departure.

13. In one example of NGO frustration, in Bagh District, AJK, USAID implementing partner GOAL was providing food and shelter assistance in eight union councils prior to the shift in operational areas. As parts of Bagh District now fall under the GOP's operational area, GOAL ceded food responsibilities in five of the union councils to the GOP. However, GOAL is still implementing USAID shelter projects in these five union councils. As GOAL is still present, but no longer providing food, GOAL's community mobilizers are receiving complaints. GOAL reported that even the local Bagh Administrator and military representatives were not aware of the shift.

14. According to the USAID/DART FFPO, the disconnect between the decision to divide food aid areas and the local governments' knowledge of this decision is fairly universal in both NWFP and AJK. At a December 9 food cluster meeting in Islamabad, humanitarian agencies recommended to the FRC that the GOP raise community awareness via radio campaigns. At the meeting, the FRC representative seemed surprised by NGO statements that local government and GOP military representatives on the ground were not aware of the new agreement. He stated that although the local government should spread the message at the district level, the FRC Commissioner could also make a radio address.

15. The USAID/DART FFPO is currently in Mansehra, and is meeting with a range of humanitarian actors to assess the food situation and address questions raised regarding food distribution responsibilities.

CROCKER